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ABSTRACT

This booklet outlines basic information on educating preschool and kindergarten age children in the Texas public schools. Teacher requirements, provisions for kindergarten endorsement and the emergency teaching permit are briefly discussed. Administrative program requirements, internships, and specialized preparation for school administrators are indicated. Basic characteristics and development of the young child are overviewed. (RH)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOR TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

FOUR- AND FIVE- YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

Texas Education Agency
201 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

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FOREWORD

This publication is one of the series "Early Childhood Education for Texas Public Schools" and is intended to provide information and assistance to Texas schools in the education of all five-year-old children. Some sections also are relevant to public school programs for four-year-olds of special populations which provide preparation for the children's successful participation in future education. Other Texas Education Agency publications have been developed that provide information regarding public school early education for children who are physically handicapped, deaf, blind, retarded, emotionally disturbed, and bilingual, and who have language and/or learning disabilities.

In 1969 the Texas legislature enacted into law provision for initiating state financial support for public school kindergartens. Then in 1977 Senate Bill 1 established kindergarten as an integral part of the state-supported foundation school program. In support of this legislation, the State Board of Education has adopted requirements for certification of kindergarten teachers.

We hope that this information about the development of the young child and about the appropriate educational preparation for him or her will support the efforts of Texas public schools in providing a quality education which meets the needs of young children.

Early Childhood Education for Texas Public Schools: Four- and Five-Year Old Children was prepared by staff members in the Elementary/Early Childhood Education Section, Texas Education Agency in consultation with representatives of the Governor's Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education. Major contributors were Dr. Libby Vernon, former Texas Education Agency staff member, and Dr. Jo Ann White, Early Childhood Specialist, University of Houston at Clear Lake City.

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Professionally trained teachers provide young children with a variety of successful learning experiences.

THE TEACHER

2 A professionally trained teacher is essential to a successful early education program. Teachers of three- and four-year-olds in accredited Texas public schools shall have the Teacher of Young Children Certificate. Kindergarten teachers shall have either the Teacher of Young Children Certificate or the kindergarten endorsement.

I. Teacher of Young Children Certificate

A. Certification Program

The program for the Teacher of Young Children, Ages 3-8 (Pre-kindergarten - Kindergarten - Grades 1 through 3) requires the following preparation:

- **General Education**

As established in all certificate standards.

- **Area of Specialization (Young Children)**

At least 24 semester hours, 12 of which must be at the junior level or above, in early childhood development/education as offered by a college or department of Home Economics or by a college or departmental units within an institution approved for teacher education.

- **Related Studies**

At least 12 semester hours in a subject or subjects, the course content of which is related to the early childhood and primary grade curriculum as attested to by catalog description from selected areas of study that provide specific information relevant to the education of young children.

- **Professional Development**

At least 30 semester hours at junior level or above in a program of professional education appropriate for

teachers of young children. The program shall include foundations of education and subject area content, as well as preparation in the skills and principles for teaching young children. Appropriate laboratory and field experiences and at least six (6) semester hours of student teaching shall be required.

B. Assignment

The holder of the certificate Teacher of Young Children, Ages 3-8 is eligible to be assigned as teacher of record in public school classes, grades, and programs for children three and four years old, in kindergarten, and in Grades 1, 2, and 3.

C. Prior Service Provision

A person who held a valid Texas Provisional Elementary Certificate and the kindergarten endorsement prior to September 1, 1979, had one year or more teaching experience in programs for children age three through Grade 3 (must include pre-primary and/or primary levels) in an accredited school, and at least 18 semester hours of early childhood development/education may be eligible to receive the Teacher of Young Children Certificate (Ages 3-8). Applicants for this Certificate based on prior experience should send a completed application, \$2 fee, complete official transcripts of all college work and degrees, and verification of acceptable teaching experience to the Division of Teacher Certification, Texas Education Agency, 201 East 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

II. The Kindergarten Endorsement

A. Endorsement Program

The program for kindergarten endorsement requires a minimum of nine semester hours of junior level courses or above, specifically devoted to kindergarten preparation, in addition to three hours kindergarten student teaching in a school accredited by the Texas Education Agency.

The kindergarten endorsement may be added to any of the following valid Texas Teacher Certificates:

- Elementary
- All-level
- Librarian (based on elementary certificate)
- Vocational Homemaking
- Deaf/Severely Hard of Hearing Therapy

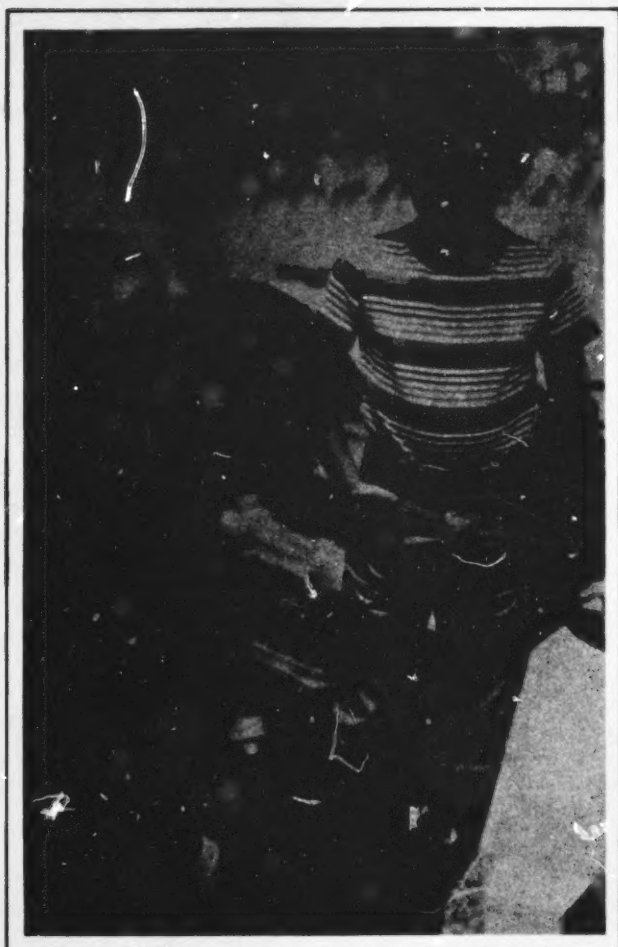
The Emergency Teaching Permit for a person who holds one of the above certificates may be reviewed annually for two scholastic years at the end of which time the full requirements must be completed at an approved college or university. A minimum of six semester hours shall be earned each year toward the kindergarten endorsement.

B. General Requirements for Colleges

The college or university offering the kindergarten endorsement shall have at least one full-time specialist who has a master's degree or above and a minimum of two years of successful experience in teaching kindergarten in a school accredited by the Texas Education Agency.

The college or university shall maintain a laboratory school or have available adequate facilities for observation of young children. Student teaching at the kindergarten level shall be done in a school accredited by the Texas Education Agency.

Library facilities shall provide materials for research and study of the growth and development of the young child and of kindergarten programs.



An understanding principal who even takes time to tie a shoe helps make school a happy adventure.

THE PRINCIPAL

Effective early education requires professional administrative support. A principal of a school offering preprimary education should be knowledgeable of the characteristics of young children and the materials and environment which meet their intellectual, personal-social, and physical needs. Through the educational leadership of the principal, the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs are integrated into the total educational programs. The proficient administrator facilitates planning and implementation of the specific objectives for early education as based on the needs of the community and the financial resources to meet those needs.

It is recommended that administrators include six hours of early childhood education/development in their professional preparation programs. The required preparation is described below.

I. Common Core Curriculum for Mid-Management Administrator and Superintendent

A. Administrative Competencies

15-18 semester hours graduate credit in courses that are open only to graduate students and are designed to develop general administrative competencies in administrative theory and practice, curriculum theory and instructional supervision, school law and business management, and the administration of special and compensatory education.

B. Academic Areas

9-12 semester hours advanced credit beyond the bachelor's degree in academic areas such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, business administration, economics, and computer science to provide breadth and understanding of the role of the professional administrator.

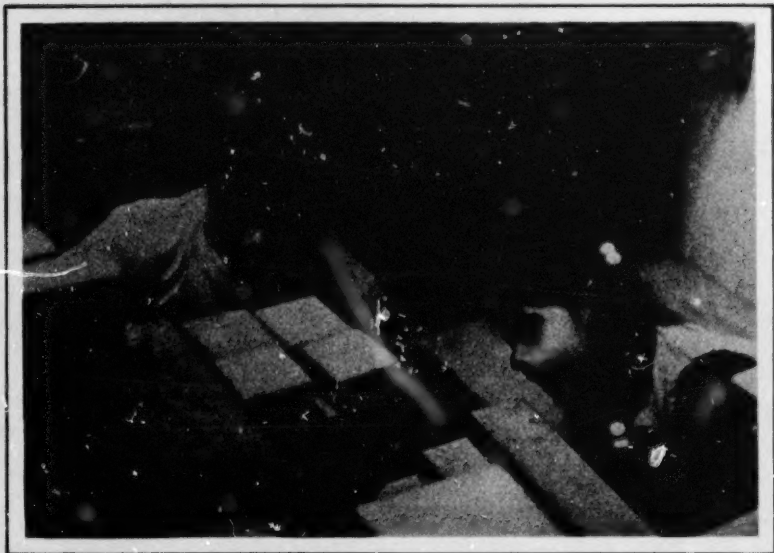
II. Internship

3-6 semester hours graduate credit in courses open only to graduate students in an approved internship.

III. Specialized Preparation for School Administrators

15-18 graduate level semester hours in areas of competency designed either for the position of principal or central administrator. Programs for principals shall include administration of special education, reading, career education, and vocational-technical education.

Total: 45 semester hours



"This is where we eat." . . . "And this is where we keep the hay." Parallel play is evident in the block corner as Sylvia builds a house and Ray builds a barn.

THE CHILD

Development in young children is a continuous process. Although children proceed through the same sequence or patterns of development, they do not all develop at the same rate. Growth patterns show wide individual differences. For example, a research study by Theodosius Dobzhansky, noted geneticist, examined biochemical individuality in over 3,000 subjects. The study found that no two cases presented the same developmental pattern. Also, no two people have identical environmental influences. It is important to be aware that the pattern of development will be different for every child. Adults working with young children recognize that those behaviors associated with the four-year-old may appear in some three-year-olds but not yet be present in a few "almost fives." However, looking at behaviors commonly associated with a specific age group does serve as an indicator of expected behaviors. All of these children would be considered normal, although functioning at different levels of development.



Splashes of bright color reflect the spontaneity and joy felt by Michael who, like most four-year-olds, enjoys expressing himself through art.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

- Are more cooperative than previously, play with small groups
- May use questions as a means of gaining adult attention
- Are learning limits
- Like to express themselves through art experience

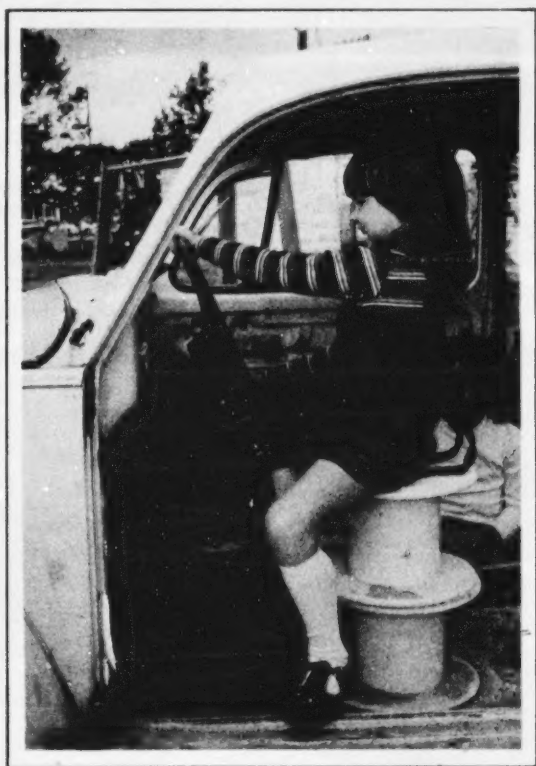
FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

- Are conformists, can't bear to be rejected by friends
- Tend to be outgoing and self-assured
- Are less dependent on parental time and attention
- Seek affection and approval

AFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Although four-year-olds demonstrate considerable physical and cognitive growth, emotionally they are still quite immature. The young child is by nature extremely self-oriented and sees the world only from her or his perspective. This is possibly one of nature's ways to ensure the survival of the species. David Elkind, a noted child psychologist, states that a young child may view a toy as an extension of himself or herself and having to share it as giving away a part of that self.

Four- and five-year-olds may occasionally be defiant or negative and show very little concern for the feelings of others. Since young children are not intellectually capable of viewing the world from another's



Other children may be waiting, but Karen is having too much fun to care. Four-year-olds typically have not learned how to take turns.

perspective, their moral judgments reflect that they cannot understand another's intent. Relationships are based on how well one's needs are met by the interaction. They tend to cooperate for a time and then quarrel even with favorite friends. With time and guidance from parents and teachers, young children begin to learn to share, take turns, consider the feelings of others, and learn to play with others.

Adults who work with young children should recognize egocentric behavior as one level in the maturation process and should not punish or inflict guilt feelings on those who demonstrate it. The practice of sharing and taking turns should be encouraged but not forced and **will be more easily acquired with maturity**. Four-year-olds are becoming more aware than previously that speech is intended for social communication. They like to talk on the phone, and they are more likely to talk rather than touch when seeking attention. They may have an imaginary friend with whom they converse, but are beginning to talk less to themselves in play. Egocentric speech disappears more slowly, however, in the socially disadvantaged child.

Four-year-olds love to tell tall tales, to brag, and to quote other adults or parents on various topics. They also love to be "silly" and may repeat the same nonsense word or phrase for hours or even days. They still imitate a great deal, especially their parents and peers. They are beginning to want to be like the others in the group, but they are also independent and like to pursue their own courses. They may become bossy with peers who do not allow domination.

By the time the child enters school, the personality has been well defined and basic standards have unconsciously been absorbed from the family environment. Leaving the world of the home, where one's place in the hierarchy is known, and entering the unknown world of peers, overseen by strange adults with different rules for organizing the environment, is an event which can be traumatic. The threat to the ego can be tremendous when a four-year-old suddenly becomes one of many children in competition for the teacher's care and attention.

Although the self-concept has been developing since birth, teachers should be aware of the impact on the child of the new experience of entering school. The teacher's acceptance nearly always assures peer acceptance and provides a basis for a positive self-concept in early years.



"Watch how high I jump!" Exhilarating jumping games in which the child can excel are favorites with five-year-olds who don't yet enjoy team activities.

Five-year-olds work and play well in a group. However, it should be remembered that although a group of five-year-olds may all be doing the same thing, they are doing so individually. They are not interested in team efforts, but rather prefer games in which the individual can excel.

The five-year-old enjoys seeing the antics of her or his peers and is inspired by them to attempt new and more daring feats of her or his own. She or he will concentrate on mastering a new skill such as riding a bike or skipping rope.

The five-year-old is very interested in home activities and should be encouraged and praised for efforts to help. Five-year-olds are very interested in babies, and both boys and girls are interested in emulating family roles and parenting behavior. They are also learning about roles in the world of work and need occasion to act out these roles.

Unlike the four-year-old, the five-year-old is learning to view things from another's spatial perspective and is beginning to recognize how another might feel about a given situation even though she or he might react differently.

Children's emotions have an all-or-nothing quality. When they are happy, they are happy all over; when they are angry, strong reactions take over every inch of their bodies. The teacher of young children must be ready to allow and guide strong feelings in the classroom. Variations in expression of emotions and in self-control develop gradually.

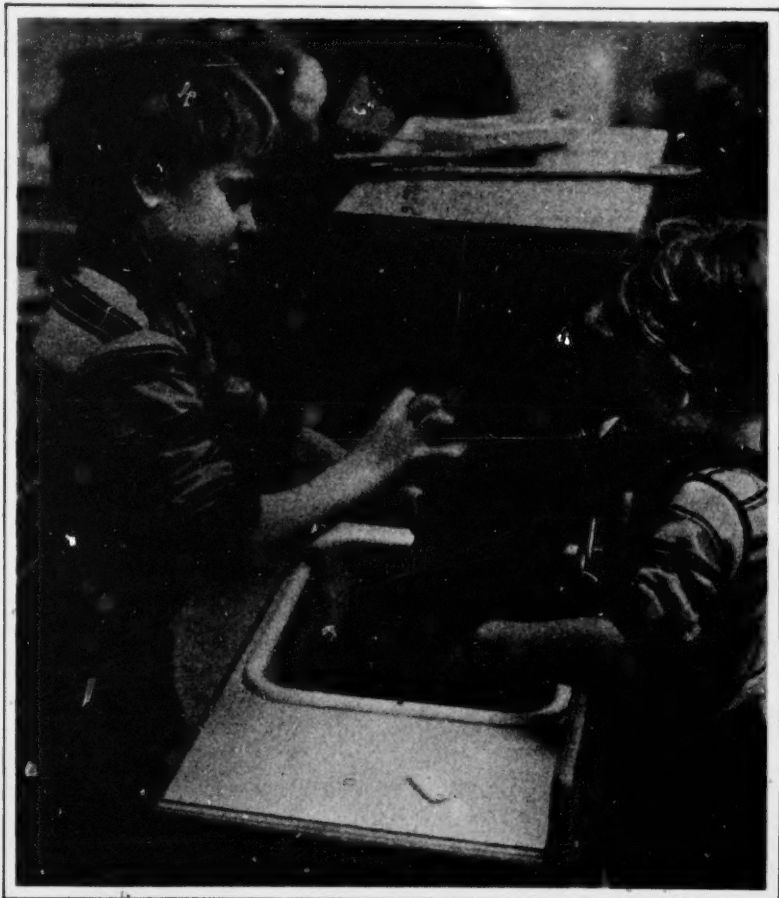
Teachers must aid in the transition from home to school. This is especially true for children from culturally different backgrounds. School provides an excellent opportunity for children to develop healthy attitudes toward different cultural values, expectations, and family experiences.

There is a great deal of overlap in the characteristics of fours and fives; however, some definite characteristics begin to emerge in the four and one-half- to five-year-old. They are beginning to feel themselves growing up and becoming independent of adult control; they feel confident and capable and resent being treated as a baby. If he or she has been at home; horizons need broadening, and if in nursery school, the child needs an understanding staff who can guide him or her into new uses of familiar material and can introduce new and challenging tools and equipment.

Most of the child's fears have disappeared by age five except fears of the elements, such as thunder and darkness, and of being separated from parents.

Anger is a normal human response to frustration. Many young children can be diverted from frustrating activities to acceptable alternatives. The wise adult has other suggestions in mind before interrupting a child's activity. The child who has to become very angry to win

concessions from adults or other children soon learns to be angry when he or she wants something. One of the challenges to adults is to deal appropriately with a child's angry behavior, accepting it as natural, without encouraging anger as standard habit or making the child feel unworthy or inferior for having natural feelings.



Babies are of interest to five-year-olds, and both boys and girls like to play parent.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

- are becoming more skilled in running and jumping
- have improved motor control that allows for learning to climb, to saw, to throw overhanded
- can dress oneself except for tying shoes
- are beginning to be able to manipulate simple puzzles

FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

- still prefer to run, not walk; climb, not sit
- are more purposeful in activities
- are changing in body proportions
- generally have developed body dominance
- have improved eye-hand control
- work in short bursts of energy



Motor control improves as four-year-olds practice skills such as woodworking.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The five-year-old shows in many ways the completion of the early childhood period. Small and large muscle control and coordination are quite advanced. The five-year-old can generally ride a bicycle, learn dance steps, jump rope, and use tools with confidence.



The five-year-old child can usually learn a simple dance like the hokey-pokey.

Although many traits which are usually labeled masculine or feminine are culturally imposed, there are biological sex differences which show up in early years. Girls are usually smaller and lighter than boys. Boys have more muscle and bone than girls; girls tend to have more body fat than boys.

The most common means of assessing growth is by use of peer comparison through height-weight-age tables. These charts constitute

only what is typical, not what is normal, for there are wide variations for normal patterns of development. Heredity and culture must also be taken into account when assessing growth. The common comment, "small for his age," must be redefined as small as compared to what and to whom? However, it may be assumed that 50 percent of four-year-old American boys have attained a height of 40¼ inches and weigh at least 36½ pounds and that 50 percent of four-year-old American girls are 40½ inches tall and weigh 36 pounds.

As the child emerges from babyhood into true childhood, the typical change is a "lengthening out" process due to a considerable loss of baby fat as well as the actual lengthening in the long bones of the arms and legs. This is partly accounted for by the incessant activity and natural exercise of the healthy child and by the fact that different parts and systems of the body achieve maturity at different times in the life of the individual. High activity levels made possible by faster metabolism and heart rate perhaps also explain how children gleefully play in snow and in summer heat, while adults seek shelter from both.

Skeletal growth is directly related to coordination and motor skills. It is far more complex than mere increases in sizes of bones present. There are changes in the density of bones present and in quality and composition of bone tissue as well as in shape and size. The younger the child the more cartilage there is in the skeletal system and the less density of minerals in the bones. Therefore, it is easier for young bones, joints, and muscles to be damaged than those of an older child. Malnutrition, fatigue, and illness also affect skeletal development. Teachers must be aware that some four- and five-year-olds may not have adequately developed hand and wrist bones required in fine motor activities.

Movement is also influenced by muscle development. Because of the high water content in the child's muscle, and also because the muscles are not yet firmly attached structurally to the skeletal system, muscle fatigue is common in the young child. Adequate rest periods during the day as well as sufficient sleep at night are necessary requirements. Most children are prone to fatigue easily with strenuous play.

A basic principle of physical development states that the body develops in a head to toe, center to extremities pattern. Development is at first more rapid in the head region of the body. The younger child's head is about one-fourth of his total body size, reflecting that the brain has

reached approximately 90 percent of its adult weight by age five. By five, however, this top-heaviness begins to disappear and the child's body proportions more nearly resemble those of older children rather than those of younger brothers and sisters.

The young child is not yet mature enough or experienced enough to be aware of body needs nor to take responsibility for one's own health needs. Continuous adult guidance is necessary to ensure adequate nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep, and freedom from infection and accidents.

Over 60 percent of the world's preschool children are malnourished. A 1977 Texas Department of Health study of low-income pregnant mothers and children found that 77-91 percent had a deficient diet and that many were anemic and had inadequate growth or weight gain. Even when a fairly good diet is available, young children may not derive full benefit of it. Since growth is relatively slower from two to six than during infancy, there is a typically lessened appetite and often a decreased interest in foods. Teachers need to communicate to parents that a smaller appetite is not necessarily a poor appetite. With a limited intake of food and a high need for growth-promoting foods, snacks and meals must be well planned to avoid a diet long on carbohydrates and fats and short on proteins, minerals, and vitamins. Those who prepare food for children should be made aware of a child's keen sense of taste. Taste buds are more generously distributed in the young child than in the adult; thus, a child is more sensitive to taste and generally does not prefer highly seasoned, spicy foods. Nutritional needs are also complicated by the fact that four- and five-year-olds are becoming more independent and sometimes express feelings of autonomy through rejection of certain foods that adults include in a daily fare. An important learning experience is the enjoyment of new foods. This learning can be enhanced through introducing unfamiliar foods in small amounts at a time when the child is hungry. Cooking experiences with children encourage experimentation with new foods. Children are strongly inclined to eat those foods they have helped to prepare.

Classroom cooking experiences also offer a means of exploring cultural diversities expressed in habits of food choices and preparation.

Improper nutrition contributes to fatigue, as does inappropriate competition, insecurity, and overstimulation. On first becoming fatigued, a child may demonstrate excessive activity and excitability;

become cranky and unreasonable; cry easily; and steadfastly deny that he or she is tired. Gradually the child will grow listless and inactive. To avoid fatigue, children need a balanced program of work, sleep, relaxation, and recreation geared to their individual needs.

More Texas children lose their lives as a result of accidents than from any other cause (*Vital Statistics 1977* Texas Department of Health). In



"I made a cookie!" Cooking combines learning and fun for young children.

addition to the startling high rate of fatal accidents, a large number of children are temporarily or permanently incapacitated as a result of mishaps. Many of these accidents can be avoided with adult understanding that the preschool child is physically impulsive, curious, and often disregards caution. A child may also be so preoccupied that he or she fails to appraise the situation correctly. Examples include running into a busy street for a ball, playing with sharp objects, throwing rocks, playing near open water ditches, climbing to hazardous heights, and

banging on glass doors or windows. Statistics show that many accidents occur at a time when children are tired and the responsible adult is busy or preoccupied.

The solution to the problem of accident prevention is not a simple one, nor is it entirely reasonable to strive for the complete elimination of all risks in a child's life. Normal progress toward independence and self-protection demands that a child gradually acquire competence in meeting and handling an increasing variety of challenges one will inevitably encounter. To attempt to protect against any and all small hazards throughout the early years is not only unrealistic, but would defeat the efforts to become self-reliant and realistic in coping with more complex challenges.

The importance of **motor development** has long been recognized. **Motor activity** is important for building both physical and psychological health. Although generally discussed within the realm of physical development, **motor development** is also necessary for the successful learning of cognitive skills. Both maturation and learning are critical to **motor development**. The ideal environment for children provides opportunities and equipment for practice at the time a child is most susceptible to the learning of a new **motor skill**. Although children follow the same basic pattern of growth, there are significant individual differences. Children differ in the rates of achieving specific motor behaviors and in amounts of activity generated and in the nature of major **motor activities**. A factor directly affecting **motor development** is child-rearing practice. Basically, families and teachers assume one of three postures:

- leave-it-to-chance, which simply takes this aspect of development for granted
- setting-the-stage, which provides facilities for play and leaves the child to his or her own devices, assuming that development will naturally follow
- actively arranging opportunities and activities to facilitate and train for motor development

Taken to extreme, any one of the three is an obviously poor choice. Parents and teachers should recognize that motor development cannot be left entirely to chance and that the presence of materials will not assure proper motivation and utilization of that equipment.

INTELLECTUAL CHARACTERISTICS

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

- Have limitless imagination. Sometimes mix truth with fiction
- May use words far beyond their level of comprehension
- Have many "why's?" because they believe that everything has a purpose
- Sometimes exhibit emotional fears of the dark, birds, dogs, etc.
- Are curious about words associated with pictures



Five-year-olds enjoy being read to and especially like stories about real life situations.

FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

- Are concerned with the "here and now"
- Persist longer at tasks than before
- Can talk meaningfully about yesterday and tomorrow
- Can ask questions that are more to the point and more relevant
- Are becoming interested in the clock and in time concepts
- Enjoy being read to — prefer stories about real occurrences in the lives of children
- Are interested in the printed word and in learning to read

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Aware of the ever-growing body of knowledge that young people must acquire, some educators and parents take an unfortunate position. They believe that if they start teaching the three "R's" earlier, they will assure the acquisition of more knowledge faster. Such thinking, however, fails to acknowledge that learning is much broader than the acquisition of any one segment of cognitive development. Furthermore, many teachers and parents exert pressures on young children to "hurry up and learn." They are unduly influenced by the fact that by the time a child is five years of age, her or his brain has reached 90 percent of its adult size and over 50 percent of the intellectual growth has been achieved.

Such preoccupation with early intellectual development has resulted in emphasis on cognitive tasks for young children. Cognition refers to mental activity and behaviors — such as perception, memory, learning, and thinking — through which knowledge is attained. Cognitive development is a function of the interaction between the inherited characteristics of a child and her or his life experiences. Active involvement with the environment causes a child to develop a rationale for how he or she perceives, interacts, and copes with the world.

Benjamin Bloom, eminent educational scholar and author, asserts that an individual is born with a nervous system and physiological makeup which are the basis on which general intelligence is developed. This takes on meaning only as the developing individual interacts with the surrounding world. Young children are constantly trying to organize and understand their world. They continuously compare what they already know with new information they acquire through interaction with their environment. The Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget describes this process as assimilation and accommodation. That is, assimilating, or fitting in, the new knowledge within the framework of what children already know, then accommodating, or altering, their thinking to include the new information. This does not occur simultaneously; rather, children have to experience discrepancies before any concept modification occurs. For instance, if a young child has a black cat, the child will insist that every black cat is his or hers until, through several encounters with various black cats, the child learns to discriminate his or her cat from all the other black cats.

Four-year-olds and some five-year-olds have not yet reached the stage

where they can examine their own thinking or spot a flaw in their reasoning. Five-year-old children think by doing, looking, and listening, and they need an environment conducive to this mode of thought.

Piaget refers to this state of development as the pre-operational stage. In other words, the child is not yet capable of carrying on mental-logical operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, prediction of cause and effect, and reversability or flexibility in thinking. Following are some common characteristics of the pre-operational child:

- has difficulty distinguishing fact from fantasy
- attributes human characteristics to plants, animals, and inanimate objects
- is egocentric — unable to view the situation from another's perspective
- is aware of the present, future, and past, but does not really understand the concepts of time and space
- is only beginning to be able to play games in which it is necessary to follow pre-established rules
- will probably pay attention to only one feature of an object, such as its color, and ignore other features, such as size or shape

David Elkind, nationally recognized psychologist and educational researcher, states that young children's mental abilities are much more integrated with their emotions than those of the older age child. If a young child is distressed, the emotion dominates intellectual as well as emotional orientation. This characteristic requires sensitivity on the part of teachers when assigning learning tasks and when evaluating mastery of those tasks. The kindergarten curriculum should provide multiple opportunities in a variety of circumstances for the child to practice and exhibit mastery of skills. An opinion based on a single observation may not take into consideration the negative effect of emotional stress of a testing experience, or the effect of experiences outside of the classroom. Systematic, consistent observation of a child's behavior in a variety of circumstances renders a more accurate assessment of the child's abilities.



A multimedia math lesson helps promote cognitive development of five-year-old children.

Young children differ considerably in their language facility, just as they differ in all other areas of development. Language acquisition is a truly remarkable phenomenon. By the age of four, the normal child has a well-defined language system, and is able to communicate adequately within his or her immediate environment. Children who appear to be nonverbal and language deficient within the classroom may simply be trying to cope with new communication patterns and an unfamiliar set of expectations. It is well to remember that every culture and subculture has an adequate language system. Problems may arise, however, when one is expected to communicate within an unfamiliar environment.

There is a tendency to equate linguistic or verbal competence with intellectual understanding and to deal too abstractly with young children. A large vocabulary can hide a lack of understanding. Four-year-old children sometimes use words far beyond their levels of comprehension. Meaning cannot be taken for granted. When children use words without having meaningful concrete experiences or concepts for those words, it can be a frustrating experience for both child and adult.

The major thrust of most early childhood programs is the enhancement of language and communication skills. It is through exposure to many varied experiences and through positive verbal and nonverbal interactions with adults that both language and thought expand. Future academic success will depend, in part, on a sound communication foundation.

Play also provides important preparation for academic success. The physical and social merits of play are obvious; however, adults tend to overlook the fact that play reflects the substance of a child's thinking. Not only do children spend most of their day in play, but play is their way of learning. If children have ample opportunities for play, they are more likely to be better prepared for academic study and disciplined learning later.

Spontaneous play allows children the opportunity to confront their environment; to develop through repeated, self-directed experiences; and to assimilate and accommodate to the environment. Play activities allow children to exercise problem solving processes in a nonthreatening manner. Play for the young child has been described as a bridge between personal inner-experiences and the outside world.

It is a common agreement among child development and early childhood education specialists that high levels of cognitive and affective functioning in children are associated with playfulness and pleasure in ongoing learning activities.

Generally speaking, the child learns not so much from the adults' direction, but rather through interaction with them. Maximum growth, development, and cognitive achievement cannot be expected through haphazard care of children. Purposeful planning of learning experiences and careful preparation of the learning environment are required to challenge the child intellectually. In order for cognitive or intellectual growth to thrive, adults must have time available to engage in mutually rewarding child/adult encounters; have a genuine interest in being with children; not have too many other distracting tasks or problems to solve; and not have an excessive number of children in their care.

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COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972; AND THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

- (1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;
- (2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;
- (3) non-discrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;
- (4) non-discriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;
- (5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex;
- (6) non-discriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and
- (7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and/or Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.